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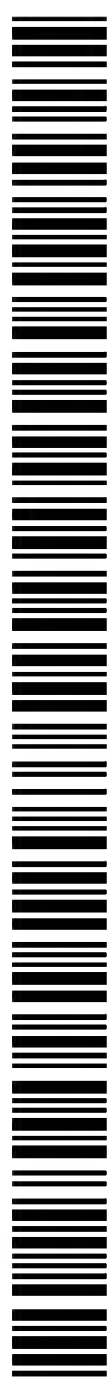
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(54) Title: PROCESS FOR THE PRODUCTION OF ETHERS

(57) **Abstract:** A process for the production of an ether optionally with a diol and/or a lactone, by reaction of a corresponding organic feed material selected from unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/ or anhydrides, mono-esters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, diesters of unsaturated dicarboxylic acids and/or anhydrides, unsaturated lactones, and mixtures of two or more thereof in the presence of hydrogen which comprises the steps of-(a)supplying a stream comprising at least a portion of the organic feed material to a pre-reactor zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions and contacting said feed with a hydrogen containing stream such that at least some of the carbon carbon double bonds are saturated;(b)vaporising the at least partly saturated feed into the hydrogen containing stream in a vaporising zone;(c)supplying the hydrogen-containing stream containing the vaporised at least partially saturated feed to a reaction zone comprising catalyst and operating under reaction conditions; (d)recovering from the reaction zone a product stream comprising the ether and optionally diol and/or lactone; and (e)recycling depleted hydrogen-containing stream to at least the pre-reactor zone or the vaporisation zone.



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